

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation and a gross unfairness. While the Fairness Doctrine has been repealed that does not mean that Sinclair should be able to force their stations to air propaganda, free, for the benefit of one party over the other.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest, and this is certainly not in the public interest when only one side is aired. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what is needed for people to make up their minds about what is going on in the world. Heavily biased news may win an election but it will not change the underlying realities of the world and they will come back to bite us in the end.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to be much more aggressive and force media companies to be neutral in their reportage.